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National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.
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SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FIFTH NATIONAL STUDY CONFERENCE ON WORLD ORDER
CLEVELAND, OHIO -- NOVEMBER 18-21, 1958
"CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY ON A CHANGING PLANET"

The opening session of the Conference heard a message from President Eisenhower which emphasized: "Only by moral principles can we hope to keep our bearings firm in the conduct of international relations." A message from Dag Hammarskjold, Secretary-General of the United Nations, pointed out: "Your quest for a definition of 'Christian Responsibility on a Changing Planet' requires a bold response to man's greatest challenge....The fact that your World Order Study Conference is taking place applies an essential Christian principle - common to all the great religions of the world as well - that knowledge of oneself is the necessary beginning and tolerance of others the ultimate objective, of spiritual leadership."

CHAIRMAN GROSS: CONFERENCE SUCCESS DEPENDS ON "HOW FAR WE GO FROM HERE"

The Honorable Ernest A. Gross, Chairman of the Department of International Affairs, reminded the delegates of specific responsibilities of the churches in the field of international affairs and world order: to sharpen "responsible concern of our membership;" to "encourage research, study, discussion and action;" to "seek informed consensus on vital issues" and "represent these views to our government, the United Nations and to Christians everywhere;" and to "mobilize spiritual resources for international peace and justice and for human rights." Mr. Gross pointed out that we, the churches, have "perhaps the largest constituency of any kind anywhere."

Mr. Gross thanked the six Preparatory Study Commissions and concluded: "The Conference...is designed to provide stimulus and guidance for two years of sustained effort through every constituent communion, council of churches and local related organization, in a nationwide education program. How far we get here is important. How far we go from here will be the full test and measure of our success."

IN THIS ISSUE are summaries and excerpts from the addresses at the Conference:

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| 1- Ernest A. Gross | 2- Roy G. Ross; Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam |
| 3- Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles | 4- Thomas K. Finletter |
| 5- Ralph W. Sockman | 6- O. Frederick Nolde |
| 8- A Message from the President of the UN General Assembly, Dr. Charles Malik | |

The Conference was called by the President of the National Council of Churches under authority of the General Board. It was convened by the Department of International Affairs of the Division of Christian Life and Work, with over 600 delegates appointed by the Council's 33 constituent communions, councils of churches and related agencies. Two-thirds of the delegates were laymen. Under the Call, the Conference spoke only for itself, but will present its Report to the General Board of the National Council of Churches. The Conference Report, including the Message to the Churches, resolutions and reports from the four working sections are now in process of publication in a study booklet. Full texts of the addresses will also be available.

DR. ROSS DESCRIBES THE CONCERNS OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Dr. Roy G. Ross, General Secretary of the National Council of Churches, pointed out that 50 years ago at its first organizing meeting, the Federal Council of Churches gave considerable attention to the problems of world order. Dr. Ross showed how this concern has been expressed over the years, including the calling of five study conferences since 1942. He listed 14 units of the N.C.C. that "deal with the things that make for peace," with policy guidance centered in the Department of International Affairs. Of our times, Dr. Ross stated:

"On this planet of rapid social changes, with many revolutions sweeping the earth, in the face of human needs and aspirations, and in the face of those who risk war for the satisfactions of power, we with the help of all men and women of good will had better succeed with our work in International Affairs, including all its aspects - political, economic, social, cultural, ideological and spiritual - if we wish a tomorrow for the causes we espouse, for the families we love, and for the people we would serve. It is our belief that men of peace, through the church and allied institutions, can tip the balance between life and death for men and nations, and we are determined to play our role to that end."

BISHOP OXNAM CALLS FOR "COOPERATION TO CHANGE THE PLANET"

Opening with a review of the setting, accomplishments and influence of the four preceding study conferences, Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam paid tribute to the courage, ability and personal qualities of Dr. Walter W. Van Kirk.

Bishop Oxnam described our response to the "ruthless and determined materialism" of Communism as based on fear and self-interest, with emphasis on military bases and co-operation "with dictators who had the bases to sell." He asserted: "True, we have held certain lines, but we have lost vast areas. We have failed to get through to the minds and hearts of the people."

Within our own country, Bishop Oxnam declared, we should strike down the secrecy psychology. "The policies our sons may be called upon to enforce or defend with their lives are the concern of every citizen. There cannot be an informed and supporting electorate unless the information essential to appraisal is available. The menace of the McCarthy concept of security to security itself should by this time be known." But it is not enough for our own people to know: "Let the Russians visit us by the tens of thousands. I think this dear land will stand the scrutiny and prove to be the best answer to Soviet propaganda. Let them see our schools, our factories, our churches, our art galleries, our children at play, and our people at worship. Let us try the hand-clasp instead of the finger-print."

"Churchmen have heavy obligations," the Bishop continued. "We do not make our proper contribution to the men charged with decision unless we seek to know the facts and in the light of facts, to call for policies that express the moral law. A word of respectful criticism is often a truer expression of friendship than uncritical support."

"Our policies in the Far East," said Bishop Oxnam, "are difficult enough to devise at best. The situation raises moral, political, economic issues and vital questions relative to nations that have refused communist shackles. But we also face the moral question of keeping ourselves isolated from 600,000,000 people, about one-quarter of the human race. We refuse to recognize China, we keep China out of the United Nations, and all the while we know that the return of Chiang Kai-shek to the Mainland is a forlorn hope, and doubt that he could stay in power if he returned. China grows in strength, develops materially at a rapid rate, and appears to be winning friends in Asia. China still stands under the indictment of being an aggressor. It has not purged itself of that condemnation."

BISHOP OXNAM CALLS FOR "COOPERATION TO CHANGE THE PLANET" (cont'd)

That it is a collectivized tyranny but few doubt. But that it is the government in fact, and in all probability will remain so, many believe.

"Is there something fundamentally wrong in a policy that seems to keep us permanently in a posture of belligerency? Upon whose shoulder is the chip to be found? Is there any way to break through Soviet and Chinese duplicity, bad manners, and cynicism? What do we do with Soviet conspiracy that creates local wars and revolution? And all of this we face at a moment when Russia appears to be shifting its drive from cold war to a basic challenge of our ability to produce goods under free enterprise at prices that can meet their production under totalitarian collectivism."

Referring specifically to the Conference theme of change, the Bishop pointed out that change is inevitable, and urged that our approach to world affairs be more largely in terms of human beings. "At times the term justice," he stated, "appears to many to be an abstraction, a legal abstraction. When we speak of justice do we hear the cries of hungry children, do we look into the eyes of terrified mothers? Does our speech carry the social passion of the Hebrew prophets and of Jesus? We do not believe the workers will lose their chains by uniting under red banners. But do our state papers give the black man of Africa, the brown man of Southeast Asia, the yellow man of China assurance that he is to be free not only to vote but to live the life abundant?"

In closing, Bishop Oxnam asserted: "Too much of our policy is based upon fear of communism rather than faith in freedom. ... Let's have done with covering up the verse of Emma Lazarus on the Statue of Liberty. Let us use our wealth to bring liberty to vast under-developed areas, and crown our good with brotherhood from sea to shining sea. Let the hysterical stay under their beds as they search for the communists. Let the Americans of faith march into the light, by way of altar, library and laboratory, to solve our problems in the interest of the common good, removing the real dangers to freedom that lie in segregation, exploitation, and discrimination.

"Let us take up our Christian responsibility and in cooperation with brothers everywhere so change the planet that when our first visitors from Mars arrive they will find a society fit to be called the Kingdom of God."

SECRETARY OF STATE DULLES: WE OURSELVES MUST BE A FORCE FOR CHANGE

The Secretary of State opened by urging the churches to "proclaim the enduring moral principles by which governmental action as well as private action should constantly be inspired and tested."

On a keynote of interdependence, Mr. Dulles stated: "United States foreign policy rests on two propositions: we want peace, liberty and well-being for ourselves; and we cannot be sure of peace, liberty or well-being unless other nations also have them." He then discussed six areas where forces for change are conspicuous:

1. The change from colonialism to independence, which has brought political independence to 700 million people in 21 countries within 15 years, and which will continue, bringing new problems. Here, the Secretary said, we must help the new nations to solve their problems in freedom and thus to preserve their newly found independence against the threat of Communism "to subvert and take over the new and inevitably inexperienced governments." Technical assistance, funds for economic development, and expanding trade will help prove us worthy of the trust of peoples in these new nations, Mr. Dulles stated.
2. The newly opened polar regions, north and south, which can provide routes for war or for peace. Secretary Dulles expressed the hope that technical discussions

SECRETARY OF STATE DULLES: WE OURSELVES MUST BE A FORCE FOR CHANGE (cont'd)

in Geneva on protection against surprise attack will contribute to peace in the Arctic and elsewhere, and that the peaceful use of Antarctica and continued scientific cooperation there will be guaranteed by treaty.

3. Peaceful uses of atomic power which imply "a new industrial revolution" and which will change the nature of peace "if atomic warfare does not destroy us first." Here, Mr. Dulles referred to bilateral arrangements to spread atomic knowledge with 42 nations and EURATOM, the atomic agency of six Western European nations. "Future production of fissionable material can, we think, be dependably controlled," the Secretary asserted, "and we propose that it should be internationally controlled to assure its use for peaceful purposes only."
4. Change "in the firmament above us" where science is opening up outer space with "possibilities of vast purport for peace - and for war." The Secretary of State pointed to U.S. efforts, bilaterally and in the United Nations, for an agreement to the effect that outer space should be used for peaceful purposes only. He continued: "What we have said about the Arctic, the Antarctic, atomic power and outer space suggests a new principle. As change opens up new areas of world-wide concern, where national control has not yet entrenched itself, let us seek the maximum possible international status."
5. Change within the society of nations, with international Communism on the one hand, having gained control over one-third of the world's people and striving vigorously to unify the world under its rule, and, on the other hand, the free peoples of the world drawing together in the face of common danger and becoming a more cohesive force in world affairs. International Communism, Mr. Dulles pointed out, has strengths and weaknesses, and is also bound to change because of internal pressures.
6. All these changes, said Mr. Dulles, require "that world society should develop from one of anarchy to one of order....The inevitability of change should be greeted as an opportunity to make the world one that measures up more closely to Christian ideals." Peace, he pointed out, will not be assured by retreating when force threatens, or by following expediency or power politics. The United States must adhere to basic principles, such as those in the Charter of the United Nations. Our national power, the Secretary said, is dedicated to being the shield of all who would retain their freedom, but he added, "We do not exclude the possibility of bolstering world order by agreements with the Sino-Soviet rulers where there are areas of mutual interest." Several such agreements in the past six years were listed, with hope mounting slightly that agreements on disarmament will be forthcoming.

In closing, Mr. Dulles emphasized that all governmental policies depend on individuals, that we, the people should change ourselves, and should also become a force for change.

THOMAS K. FINLETTER: CAN OUR FOREIGN POLICY CHANGE FAST ENOUGH?

"Never before in history has the foreign policymaker of this or any other country been faced with the absolute necessity of seeing to it that major war does not happen." This was the challenge made by the former Secretary of the Air Force, who explained the reasons for the "new imperative" as follows:

1. The doctrine of the "atomic stalemate" - that no nation would dare attack another for fear of annihilation - is going out of date as the time approaches when Soviet Russia, China, or some other nation may be able to destroy us without fear of retaliation. Weapons are going to become more and more dreadful, as different from present ones as atomic weapons are from earlier armaments.

THOMAS K. FINLETTER: CAN OUR FOREIGN POLICY CHANGE FAST ENOUGH? (cont'd)

2. In the meantime, there is the possibility of major war starting from a mistake, either "a small war expanding into a big war which no one wants or, in the days of push-button warfare, when some lunatic or some believer in preventive war might start up the whole machinery of destruction."

With the likelihood of war thus increasing, Mr. Finletter urged that we "get busy with our minds, and our character, to do everything that lies within our power to save ourselves and the others of the world." The fundamental purpose of U.S. foreign policy should be to reduce tensions between nations, to create a climate of world opinion making possible an agreement to disarm, "while at the same time moving into energetic negotiations for the development of a stage-by-stage, enforced plan for the control and elimination of weapons." Our "deterrent military power" would be a shield during this interim period, according to Mr. Finletter.

To improve relations between the West and the non-Communist nations of Asia and Africa, Mr. Finletter stated that "we must give up the emphasis on defense treaties, on military aid and on military threats." This would mean relying more on the United Nations, instead of on unilateral action and power politics. Specifically, we would give up or change the nature of the Baghdad Pact and the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, and "call upon the United Nations to take over from us the defense and decision as to the ultimate sovereignty of Formosa and the adjacent islands." On the positive side, Mr. Finletter continued, the United States should take the lead in providing aid at a much higher level to help these nations of Asia and Africa to improve their living standards.

To achieve a better atmosphere between ourselves and the communist empires of Soviet Russia and China, to get rid of the mutual suspicion that the other would attack "if war ever seemed good business," Mr. Finletter urged that the U.S. propose a full-scale disarmament plan. He added, "But I do want to say that we had better stop talking about disarmament and indeed about peace unless we are willing to abandon the attitude that the recognition of Red China is something which we will never accept under any conditions."

In spite of "the inertia produced by centuries of lawlessness in the relationships between states," Mr. Finletter declared "...we have no choice other than to believe that we may be able to work out a world in which we will not destroy each other...and to do everything we individually can do to achieve such a world."

DR. SOCKMAN SPEAKS ON "THE HUMAN TOUCH ON A CHANGING PLANET"

The Rev. Dr. Ralph W. Sockman asserted that while we are more aware than ever of other nations, "we are not seeing the peoples of the world as human beings," and we do not "understand the hearts and hopes of God's other children beyond our national boundaries." He continued: "One of our troubles in international relations is that we judge ourselves by our motives and other peoples by their actions. We Americans believe and assert that our motives are pure, that we desire nothing but the peace of the world. But other nations judge us by our world-wide air bases and our world-cruising navies. We must admit what our fears would be if Russia planted air fields in Mexico and Cuba."

Dr. Sockman gave a special challenge to churchmen to seek to make America worthy of the title, "this nation under God." He asserted: "We must put more charitableness of judgment into our charity and more humility into our helpfulness. Let us cease talking about 'backward peoples' and 'peasant minds' and have more appreciation of foreign scientists, more study of foreign literature and more respect for ways of living other than our own. Churchmen generally are not really aroused to the perils of our changing planet. They are more concerned about their peace of mind than about the peace of the world. Ours has been called the age of the ulcer, but our ulcers are caused by personal tensions rather than by public dangers."

DR. SOCKMAN SPEAKS ON "THE HUMAN TOUCH ON A CHANGING PLANET" (cont'd)

There is much that individuals can do to change the world situation, he continued. "We can be creators of public opinion, and community sentiment affects the climate of congressional action. Let us not underestimate the power of letters and the educational value of public debate. The foreign press watches what we do in our communities as closely as what we say in Congress. Last summer in Japan, I found that Little Rock was lasting front page news in the Japanese English speaking papers."

Dr. Sockman pointed out, "It is so much easier to rally crowds around the banners of hate and fear than around the banners of love and faith," a fact that leads the way to "charlatans in politics, press and pulpit." He continued, "The inertia of the intelligent allows the hysterias of the ignorant to wield a disproportionate influence. Too many thoughtful persons are so disgusted with propaganda that they do little to promote their constructive ideas. Thus they leave news to the noisy and the subversive. Many respectable citizens could be morally indicted for subversive inactivity."

The necessity for opening more and more cultural channels through the iron curtains was emphasized. "The arts offer excellent opportunity, as witness the welcome given our musicians in Moscow and the Soviet dancers in America. Medicine is another most promising field for the cultivation of cooperation. Let us increase the exchange of students, educator ministers and tourists. Even the Kremlin eventually takes note of Russian public opinion."

In closing, Dr. Sockman warned, "The nuclear age leaves no margin for error. In a simple time, men could practice the principle of 'live and learn.' Now we must learn if we are to live."

DR. NOLDE: CHRISTIAN ACTION BENEFITS BY ECUMENICAL PERSPECTIVE

Dr. O. Frederick Nolde, Director of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, addressed the Conference at a dinner where twelve overseas consultants were special guests. Dr. Nolde began by describing the ecumenical reality that finds expression in the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches, parent bodies of the C.C.I.A.: "This ecumenical reality is characterized by a common faith, a world-wide mission, a deepening and expanding fellowship across all frontiers of nation, race and class. These characteristics have important meaning for Christian witness to the world of nations. A common faith offers not only a term of reference for the interpretation of problems, but also the spirit in which solutions can most fruitfully be sought. In the proclamation of the Gospel to the ends of the earth, accompanied by varied programs of education and service, Christianity touches the lives of many people who serve their governments in official capacity as well as those who bear normal responsibility of citizenship. The world-wide fellowship is a potent factor in bridging the gulf of the national and regional differences from which international tensions so frequently arise."

The C.C.I.A., Dr. Nolde explained, is related by voluntary arrangements with national departments or commissions on international affairs. "It can receive from them information about actions that have been taken or problems that need attention and reflect to them positions held in the broader Christian community or suggest lines of action for their consideration." This makes the position of the churches on any international problem the result of contributions from many sources.

While there is no way to guarantee that the "right" action will be taken, Dr. Nolde pointed out: "When action is taken in ecumenical perspective, there is greater likelihood that it will be freed from purely nationalistic objectives and that it will encourage a reappraisal of national procedures which may have outlived their usefulness - let me add, without endangering legitimate national loyalties or....interests." He explained how ecumenical consensus influenced the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Korean armistice, withdrawal of British and French forces from Egypt, cessation of nuclear weapons testing, the question of Cyprus, economic and social development, and the plight of refugees.

DR. NOLDE: CHRISTIAN ACTION BENEFITS BY ECUMENICAL PERSPECTIVE (cont'd)

Dr. Nolde turned to a possible ecumenical impact on the concerns of the study conference. He said: "The addresses and papers of this Conference have given considerable attention to United States policy on China. It is an amazing fact that, until the emergence of the recent crisis in the Formosa Straits, public opinion in this country was neither critical nor vocal. The situation has been different in Christian opinion outside the United States. For years, our colleagues abroad have found it difficult to understand the United States' position. There has recently been evidence of the tendency on the part of Christian groups in some countries to go so far as to oppose any governmental policy which supports the U.S. present stand on China. This point of view seems prompted by the belief (1) that the continued isolation of over 600 million people from the rest of the world is artificial and unhealthy; and (2) that progress in relieving world tensions, particularly progress on the cessation of testing and on disarmament, requires that the government in power on the mainland of China - currently the People's Republic - be formally represented in inter-governmental organs. I venture to say that the following steps would command wide-spread support: (1) with the relaxation of military action, measures should be taken to see to it that the off-shore islands do not in fact constitute a thorn in the side of peace - measures involving successively demilitarization, neutralization, and determination of juridical status; (2) the early determination of the juridical status of Formosa, as well as the applicability of the principle of self-determination to the people of Formosa; (3) the prompt determination by the United States, under what conditions it would support accreditation of representatives of the People's Republic of China in the UN - with the understanding that, just as the Nationalist Government has repudiated the use of force to recapture the mainland, so the People's Republic should repudiate the use of force to gain Formosa."

On the second issue, Dr. Nolde emphasized that our colleagues in many countries want every possible effort directed toward progressive disarmament and cessation of nuclear weapons testing, and urged reappraisal of U.S. overseas bases. Third, Dr. Nolde stressed the importance of offering economic and technical assistance on a basis of respect and mutuality, and emphasized the preference of Christian leaders for multi-lateral plans without the restriction of nationalistic strings.

Three broad principles were then offered for the U.S.: (1) that it "make convincingly clear its over-riding objective of a united world, not one wherein divisions are sharpened and perpetuated;" (2) that there be a new attitude in negotiation, instead of dealing with communist officials "as juvenile or even adult delinquents;" (3) that the U.S. put its own house in order, making practice conform to profession, since "our championship of freedom throughout the world loses its punch at home ... by our sufferance of enforced segregation on grounds of race." Dr. Nolde closed with emphasis on "the full dependence for effective ecumenical action upon the insight, persistence, and courage of Christians, both individually and corporatively, at the domestic level."

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DR. CHARLES MALIK DESCRIBES CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY ON A CHANGING PLANET

A message from Dr. Charles Malik, President of the United Nations General Assembly, 13th session, was read at the Conference dinner by Dr. Edwin T. Dahlberg, President of the National Council of Churches. The full text of Dr. Malik's message follows:

"It would appear that Christians have seven basic responsibilities in a changing world, which really means in any world.

"They must first study and know the facts as profoundly as possible. This means thousands of hours of hard, responsible work; and this includes especially knowledge of the laws of change. The Christian has no excuse whatsoever to be shallow and sentimental. The Christian thinker must be the deepest thinker in the world; his aim is to overcome all stupid superficiality of analysis.

"They must, secondly, feel profound concern for the state of the world. They are makers of history and not mere onlookers, and God will hold them strictly accountable for the course of events. Profound and troubled concern is an absolute Christian necessity.

"They must, thirdly, be in close touch with situations. They must think, act and react from within these situations. To think and talk from outside is a very grievous sin these days. And this 'closeness of touch' must include taking the poor, lonely, weak, distracted, overworked and overburdened leaders into the inner warm fellowship of the Church. The Church cannot assume responsibility for political decisions; it can only criticize, inspire, commend set up norms in accordance with the will of its Lord.

"Prayer is a fourth requisite. The Christian must daily invoke several times God's will on earth as it is in Heaven. Nothing is more potent before the throne of God than the sincere prayer of a contrite heart.

"Fifthly, a Christian has responsibilities to Jesus Christ, over and above any other responsibilities he may be shouldering in this life. He must therefore witness to him, amidst every change and despite every change. A most grievous sin is to allow the change so to overwhelm us as to cause us to forget our witnessing duties. Our direct knowledge of the grace of Christ is infinitely more important than all the world and all its changes.

"Sixthly, the Christian must seek the unity of the Church. This is the urge at ecumenicity. If the Christians really become one, the world will be suddenly transfigured. This takes infinite humility. No greater scandal exists than that of the separation of those who were baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

"Finally, Christians must remain faithful to their faith, in all the plenitude of its fundamental tenets as they have received them from the Apostles, from the Fathers and from the Saints. This holy deposit of faith regarding man, history and God is above all systems, all ideologies and all economic and political orders. It is most important to guard the freedom and independence of our faith from any human achievement, no matter how noble and true. Jesus Christ, the Cross, the Gospel, the Church, the freedom of the children of God - these things cannot be subject to any 'change' in any 'changing planet.' The primary Christian responsibility on a changing planet is to be humbly faithful to Jesus Christ.

"If we know the truth in all its depths, if we are genuinely troubled and concerned about the world, if for any situation we learn to speak from within, if we pray and pray and pray, if we never faint in witnessing to Jesus Christ despite our dullness and preoccupations, if we seek the original unity of the Church according to the will of Christ, and if we remain faithful to the full plenitude of our faith, then there is hope that a changing planet will in God's time, be captured to the glory of God in Jesus Christ."